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REMARKS

The Applicant has carefully read and reviewed the Office Action mailed March 2, 2004. Claims 1-11, 14-17, 25 and 26 were examined in the office action. Claims 18-21 were withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-3, 10, 11, 14-17, 25 and 26 were rejected. Claims 4-9 were objected to. Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, and 25 have been amended in this response. Claims 5, 6, 8, and 26 have been canceled in this response. Claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, and 25, as amended, are pending in the application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 10, 11, 14-17, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Behrens et al in view of Kusbel et al.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate limitations similar to claim 4 which was previously objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but was indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 10 and 25 depend from Claim 1 and add additional limitations thereto.

Claim 4, which was previously objected to, has been amended to place it in independent form, incorporating all the limitations of the base claim. Claims 2 and 3, as amended, depend from Claim 4 and add additional limitations thereto.

Claim 11 has been amended to incorporate limitations similar to previously objected to claim 4. Claims 14-17 all depend from claim 11 and provide additional limitations thereto.

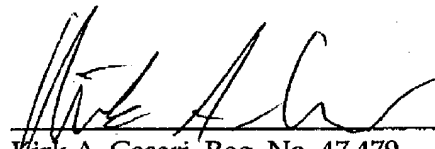
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Conclusion

For these reasons, claims 1, 4, and 11 are believed to be patentable over the prior art of record, therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection/objection of claims 1, 4, and 11 is requested. Claims 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14-17, and 25 are allowable as dependent claims depending from an allowable independent claim and providing additional limitations thereto. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection/objection of claims 1-4, 7, 9-11, 14-17, and 25 is respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully asserts that the present claims particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which is regarded as the invention.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and favorable action with respect to the present application is requested.

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Kirk A. Cesari, Reg. No. 47,479
Seagate Technology LLC
1280 Disc Drive
Shakopee, MN 55379-1863
Telephone: 952-402-3534
Fax: 952-402-2657